

Senate Bill No. 224

CHAPTER 494

An act to amend Section 129885 of, and to add and repeal Section 129875.2 of, the Health and Safety Code, relating to health facilities.

[Approved by Governor October 4, 2005. Filed with
Secretary of State October 4, 2005.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 224, Chesbro. Health facilities: construction plans.

The existing Alfred E. Alquist Hospital Facilities Seismic Safety Act of 1983 requires design and construction standards for hospital buildings that house patients who have less than the capacity of normally healthy persons to protect themselves, and that must be reasonably capable of providing services to the public after a disaster. The act requires the Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development (OSHDP) to approve or reject all plans for the construction or alteration of a hospital building, but authorizes OSHDP to exempt from that review or expedite the review for certain projects. Existing law requires projects for the construction or alteration of hospital buildings and skilled nursing and intermediate care facilities that are single-story, wood-frame or light steel frame construction to be exempt from plan review and inspection by OSHDP prior to construction if the facility demonstrates to OSHDP by written description of the project that specified conditions are met.

Until January 1, 2009, this bill would require OSHDP to establish a plan review project that would exempt multistory hospital buildings from plan review and inspection by OSHDP if the facility demonstrates to OSHDP by written description of the project that those same specified conditions are met. The bill would require OSHDP to prepare and submit to the health policy committees of the Senate and Assembly a comprehensive report of the plan review project by March 1, 2008.

Existing law authorizes the governing authority of a hospital to request OSHDP to perform plan review and building inspection services for any building where outpatient clinical services of a licensed health facility are provided that is separated from a building in which hospital services are provided. If OSHDP agrees to perform those services, existing law requires OSHDP to charge an amount equal to its standard fee for the construction and alteration of hospital buildings.

This bill would instead require OSHDP to perform those services upon that request.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. Section 129875.2 is added to the Health and Safety Code, to read:

129875.2. (a) The office shall establish a plan review project for multistory hospital buildings. The purpose of the plan review project shall be to simplify the office's review and inspection process and to expedite completion of repair and maintenance.

(b) Under a plan review project, construction or alteration projects for multistory hospital buildings shall be exempt from plan review and inspection by the office prior to construction if the facility demonstrates to the office, by written description of the project, that all of the following conditions are met:

(1) The construction or alteration is limited to repairing existing systems or keeping up the course of normal or routine maintenance.

(2) The repair to existing systems or normal or routine maintenance either restores the facility to the same operational status or improves operational status from the facility's operating condition immediately prior to the event, occurrence, or condition that necessitated the alteration.

(3) The repair to existing systems or normal or routine maintenance is not ordinarily within the standard of practice of a licensed architect or registered engineer.

(4) The repair to existing systems or normal or routine maintenance does not degrade the status or condition of the fire and life safety system from the status of the system immediately prior to the event, occurrence, or condition that necessitated the alteration.

(c) Upon completion of construction or alteration of any building subject to this section, and prior to use of the repaired system or other subject of the construction or alteration, the office shall inspect and approve the work. The office may require an interim inspection for code compliance when walls, ceilings, or other materials or finishes will cover the final work.

(d) Upon compliance with subdivision (b), the office shall approve the written description of the project and issue a building permit.

(e) The office shall prepare a comprehensive report of the plan review project by March 1, 2008. The report shall include a comprehensive review of the plan review project and shall assess whether the purpose of the plan review project has been achieved and whether the construction or alteration projects submitted under this section have resulted in any significant potential danger to the safety of hospital patients and workers or the public. The report shall be submitted to the health policy committees of the Senate and Assembly.

(f) This section shall remain in effect only until January 1, 2009, and as of that date is repealed, unless a later enacted statute, that is enacted before January 1, 2009, deletes or extends that date.

SEC. 2. Section 129885 of the Health and Safety Code is amended to read:

129885. (a) A city or county, as applicable, shall have plan review and building inspection responsibilities for the construction or alteration of buildings described in paragraph (1) of subdivision (b) of Section 129725. The building standards for the construction or alteration of buildings specified in paragraph (1) of subdivision (b) of Section 129725 established or applied by a city or county, shall not be more restrictive or comprehensive than comparable building standards established, or otherwise applied, to clinics licensed pursuant to Chapter 1 (commencing with Section 1200) of Division 2. For chronic dialysis and surgical services buildings, construction or alteration shall include conversion of a building to a purpose specified in paragraph (1) of subdivision (b) of Section 129725.

(b) Upon the initial submittal to a city or county by the governing authority or owner of a hospital for plan review and building inspection services for buildings described in paragraph (1) of subdivision (b) of Section 129725 for chronic dialysis and surgical services, the city or county shall reply in writing to the hospital as to whether or not the plan review by the city or county will include a certification as to whether or not the clinic project submitted for plan review meets the clinic standards propounded by the office in the California Building Standards Code.

If the city or county indicates that its review will include this certification, it shall do all of the following:

(1) Apply the applicable clinic provisions of the latest edition of the California Building Standards Code.

(2) Certify in writing to the applicant within 30 days of completion of construction whether or not the standards have been met.

(c) If, upon initial submittal, the city or county indicates that its plan review will not include this certification, the governing authority or owner shall submit the plans to the Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development and the office shall review the plans for certification to determine whether or not the clinic project meets the standards propounded by the office in the California Building Standards Code.

(d) When the office performs the certification review, the office shall charge a fee in an amount not to exceed its actual cost.

(e) Notwithstanding subdivision (a), the governing authority of a hospital may request the Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development to perform plan review and building inspection services for buildings described in paragraph (1) of subdivision (b) of Section 129725 and Section 129730. The office shall perform these services upon request and shall charge an amount equal to its standard fee for the construction and alteration of hospital buildings. The construction or alteration of these buildings shall conform to the applicable provisions of the latest edition of the California Building Standards Code for purposes of the plan review and building inspection of the office pursuant to this subdivision. The office shall issue the building permit and certificate of occupancy for these facilities.

(f) A building described in paragraph (1) of subdivision (b) of Section 129725 that is subject to the plan review and building inspection of the office pursuant to subdivision (e), may be designated by the governing authority or owner of the hospital as a “hospital building” as long as the building remains under the jurisdiction of the office. This hospital building shall be reviewed and inspected according to the standards and requirements of the Alfred E. Alquist Hospital Facilities Seismic Safety Act of 1983 (Chapter 1 (commencing with Section 129675)).

(g) When a building is accepted for review by the office pursuant to subdivision (e), the governing authority of the hospital shall not request the city or county, as applicable, to conduct plan review and building inspection for any subsequent alteration of the same building, unless written notification is submitted to the office by the governing authority or owner of the hospital.